

Leesburg Standing Residential Traffic Committee  
Minutes of Monday, August 1, 2005

The Leesburg Standing Residential Traffic Committee met on Monday, August 1, 2005, in the Lower Level Conference Room of the Municipal Government Center, 25 West Market Street, Leesburg, Virginia. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Elizabeth Whiting, Chair  
Councilmember Susan Horne  
Planning Commissioner Kevin Wright

Vice Chair Sandy Kane  
Brian Rolston

Town Staff Present

Mike Bomgardner  
Mark McCartney  
Nick Colonna

Ad Hoc Committee Member Present    Citizens Present

Marcia Brown

Jennifer Gryder  
John Long  
Jody Donahue

Misti Booker  
Caroline Milne  
Lisa Hamilton

1. Minutes: Sandy Kane added an amendment to the minutes noting that she had chaired the meeting of June 6, 2005 in Liz Whiting's absence. On motion by Sandy Kane, seconded by Mike Bomgardner, the minutes of the June 6, 2005 meeting were unanimously approved as presented.

2. Public Comment: (i) Jennifer Gryder advised the Committee that the United Methodist Church's Wednesday afternoon children's program will be resuming next month and they would appreciate the Leesburg's Police Department's support when taking the approximately thirty children across West Market Street and back at the Wirt Street crosswalk. Mark McCartney noted that he would flag the matter for assistance and that an officer should be available unless that officer was actively responding to a matter at a different location. (ii) Misti Booker reported that the motorists' honking their horns at 1:30 in the morning in front of her house on Meade Drive, S.W. has begun again. She noted the high number of children who live in the immediate vicinity of the intersections where stop signs were erected on Meade Drive, S.W. Ms. Booker indicated that she was researching what liability the Town would have if someone was injured after the removal of the stop signs. She noted that one stop sign (at Meade Drive, S.W. and Lawford Drive, S.W.) is the location of a school bus stop for over thirty elementary and middle school children. Ms. Booker stated that the stop signs are effective, while the proposed traffic calming devices are expensive, permanent and of questionable effectiveness. She stated that she drove over the new Marshall Drive, N.E. raised crosswalk in her SUV at 25 mph and that she didn't feel any need to slow down. Finally, she stated that it would be hard for parents to educate their children to change their behavior regarding crossing the street if the stop signs were removed. (iii) John Long spoke in favor of keeping the stop signs in place, stating that they are effective and that the proposed traffic circle at Moore Place, S.W. won't work. He wants a traffic study to be performed before any decision in the removal of the existing stop signs or the installation of any other traffic calming measures are considered. Mr. Long complained that only anecdotal evidence of discontent exists

and that there hasn't been any written documentation of traffic problems. (iv) Caroline Milne stated that she has lived at 202 Meade Drive, S.W. since before the stop signs were erected and that they have been very effective at slowing motorists' speeds along Meade Drive, S.W. She doesn't see the need for any change; although it might be okay to substitute the installation of a speed cushion for the stop signs at Lawnhill Court, S.W. Ms. Milne felt that part of the problem may be that the Woodlea Manor section of Meade Drive, S.W. should be included in the all-way stop regime. (v) Jody Donahue opposes removing the stop signs, saying that they are effective and enforceable and that there are no enforceable consequences for driving too fast through other traffic calming devices. He stated that proof of the stop signs' effectiveness is that people are out in their front yards and using the sidewalks. Mr. Donahue stated that he doesn't want Meade Drive, S.W. to become an unimpeded thoroughfare. (vi) Lisa Hamilton related that she lives at the corner of Meade Drive, S.W. and Lawford Drive, S.W. and spoke in favor of retaining the stop signs.

3. Ad Hoc S.W. Subcommittee HOA Meeting update: Ad Hoc Committee member Marcia Brown reported that only two members of the Ad Hoc committee were in attendance this evening. They discussed with staff (Mike Bomgardner) the oral and written comments received at three neighborhood outreach meetings held July 20, 27 and August 3, 2005. Ms. Brown indicated that while the strong outpouring among Greenway Farms subdivision attendees in support of keeping the existing stop signs suggested that it may not be feasible to recommend a plan that would remove them. She felt that the attendees showed no appreciation for the disruptions in traffic flows that the signs have caused (e.g. a diversion of traffic into Country Club Estates where she lives). The plan is for the subcommittee to meet August 29th and recommend a revised plan to the Committee for submission to the Town Council. Chair Liz Whiting urged the subcommittee to take a step back to review not just the recent input from speakers at the outreach meetings, but to look at the "charter" given to them by the Town Council, as well as the process they followed and the data that they studied during their deliberations. While they may decide that they are ready to make their recommendations, they should also consider whether they would like to have more studies done or outreach sessions conducted since comments received suggest that there remain highly-polarized constituencies. Liz Whiting also noted for the citizens in attendance that the Committee would meet August 29th at 7:00 pm and that the Ad Hoc Committee would be scheduled to meet the same evening at 6:00 pm and that both meetings were open to the public.

4. Update on FY05 Traffic Calming expenditures: The agenda lists the expenditures from last year's budget. Liz Whiting noted that the Committee's "not-to-exceed" contribution to the Downtown pedestrian crosswalks is broken up between the separate crosswalks. She stated that because the crosswalk at West Market Street and Memorial Drive, N.W. required design time and improvements outside of what could be quickly committed. She made the "command" decision after consulting with Calvin Grow to authorize the purchase of additional traffic counters. This will enable recording results simultaneously at more locations, which should allow more accurate results when tracking at one location is asserted to drive traffic to another location. It was noted that the \$1,500.00 budgeted for the crosswalk at West Market Street and Memorial Drive,

N.W. would include a handicap ramp on the south side of West Market Street and a painted crosswalk. Vice Chair Sandy Kane noted her concern in relation to item H. that the Hampton Inn representatives seemed to be asserting that the Town needed to take over problems there with trespassing pedestrians. Sandy Kane felt strongly that the Hampton Inn officials first must be expected to reasonably police trespassing on its property and that it sounded like they thought the Committee would jump up and offer to extend the fence along the Route 15 Bypass. Kevin Wright noted that the signs promoting Safe-T-Ride usage on the Route 15 Bypass fence should also be in Spanish and questioned what signage could be posted on the east side of the Route 15 Bypass. Mark McCartney noted that targeted bilingual flyers distributed among neighborhoods that generate the highest ridership and pedestrian crossings would be more effective than signage. Liz Whiting also noted the anticipation that signage and flyers would be placed at the bus shelters that are to be established.

5. Update of the Smart trailer request from the last month: Mark McCartney reported that technical difficulties precluded providing results from the last month.

6. Update on enforcement of speed limit in the 400 block of South King Street: Mark McCartney introduced his Town-wide report on traffic enforcement efforts for the previous three months that will provide a “global” overview for upcoming reports. During the discussion, Committee members urged that enforcement along Davis Avenue, S.W. commence off of Dry Mill Road, S.W. for traffic coming into Town since this is becoming a commuter cut-through.

7. Update of enforcement of the speed limit on Potomac Station Drive, N.E. at Tonquin Drive, N.E.: See item #6.

8. Update on Lawson Road opening: Mike Bomgardner reported that Lawson Road, S.E. is expected to reopen prior to August 28, 2005.

9. Review of Residential Traffic Task Force Report: The Committee agreed to defer discussion of the Residential Traffic Task Force Report to the August 29th meeting in the hope that there would be a more robust turnout of members.

10. Committee member concerns: (i) Kevin Wright noted that he had raised his concerns during other discussions. (ii) Brian Rolston noted that it had been some time since VRTA had updated figures for Safe-T-Ride usage and renewed the Committee’s request for cumulative figures comparing consecutive months. Liz Whiting asked staff to request these figures for the August 29th meeting. Brian Rolston also asked staff to follow up with the Loudoun County Public School’s transportation staff to confirm that the flashing “school zone” signs would be posted for the Marshall Drive raised crosswalk before school opens on August 29th. (iii) Sandy Kane reiterated her concern that the Town should not have to bear the burden of responding to a private hotel’s trespassing problem. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. The next meeting is Monday, August 29, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. Staff is to contact Liz Whiting if anything arises needing Committee consideration in the interim.

